



# A HIGH-QUALITY CHILDCARE PROVIDER... PROVIDER...*checklist*

... is loving and responsive

does the caregiver:

- enjoy responding to and interacting with your child?
- support and encourage your child in their relationships and skills?

... respects a child's individuality

does the caregiver:

- nurture your child with their development in mind?
- notice your child's personal traits and care for them with those traits in mind?

... provides a stimulating, child-friendly environment

is the childcare space:

- clean, safe, and organized?
- interesting, stimulating, and adaptable for free play and learning?

... is familiar with social emotional development

does the caregiver:

- provide curriculum or scheduled learning for your child?
- participate in training and professional development to best serve your child?

... has a relationship with you

does the caregiver

- create a welcoming atmosphere and communicate the importance of family involvement?
- communicate well with you as the child's parent?

# WHEN SHOULD I START LOOKING FOR CHILDCARE?

**Immediately.** Do not wait until your second or third trimester. Most high-quality childcare providers have at least a 10-month infant waitlist.

## HOW DO I USE THIS CHECKLIST?

This checklist is a tool to help you choose a high-quality childcare provider for your child. You can get the most out of your checklist by following these steps:

1

Start with the Step Up to Quality Provider Search by visiting [stepuptoquality.ne.gov](https://stepuptoquality.ne.gov). Step Up to Quality is where Nebraska parents find quality-rated child care and early childhood education. Parents/guardians can search for providers based on certain criteria like childcare license type, age of children needing care, and location.

2

Call, visit, interview, and check testimonials and reviews of the childcare providers on your list. As you're gathering information, keep the elements of a high-quality childcare provider in mind.

3

Go through one checklist for each childcare provider. Check off the elements as you notice them in the environment and personnel you're dealing with. Using these criteria, choose a provider that best meets your family's needs.